

*Lewis: State*

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## Otepka Still on Payroll Despite Firing by State

By the Associated Press

Almost four months ago, the State Department fired Otto F. Otepka, its former chief security evaluator, for insubordination.

Yet Mr. Otepka is still drawing his salary—and will likely remain on the Government payroll for some time.

Though officials at the State Department maintain that the Otepka case is "being pursued in the normal administrative process," they acknowledge that the Johnson administration is reluctant to speed up this process to avoid stepping on sensitive toes in the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee.

Mr. Otepka was suspended September 23, 1963, and charged with conduct "unbecoming an officer of the Department of State" by having allegedly given classified documents to the Senate subcommittee without authorization.

He was dismissed from his \$18,240-a-year post November 5, when the department upheld the charges against him.

The former security officer appealed the dismissal and the State Department, in accordance with Civil Service regulations, gave him a list of six men early in January from which to choose a hearing officer for his case.

Four of the six were foreign service officers and two work for the Agency for International Development. All are equal in rank with Mr. Otepka.

Mr. Otepka objected to the panel, saying he could not expect an impartial hearing from any of the men on the list.

The department rejected his objections, reminding him that he always could appeal outside the department, directly to the Civil Service Commission or to the courts.

Should Mr. Otepka do so, however, he would cease to get his pay. So he answered and repeated his objections against the six men. Mr. Otepka added, however, that should the department insist, he would name Edward A. Dragon of the AID office of emergency planning.